

REMARKS

Claims 1-18 are pending in the application. Claim 1 has been amended, claim 3 has been canceled, and claims 19-20 have been added, leaving claims 1-2 and 4-20 for consideration upon entry of the present amendment. Support for the amendment can be found on page 10, paragraph 2. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration in view of the amendment and remarks submitted herewith.

Applicants appreciate the Examiner's indication that claim 4 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form. However, as explained below, Applicants submit that all the claims are now allowable.

Claims 1-3 and 5-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Hisada et al. (US5,624,255) ("Hisada"). "A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." *Verdegaal Bros. V. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987). Moreover, "[t]he identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the * * * claim." *Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co.*, 868 F.2d 1226, 1236, 9 USPQ2d 1913, 1920 (Fed. Cir. 1989).

Claims 1-2 and 4-20 include the following limitation: "wherein the transport chamber is provided with a heating element for heating the treatment chamber." Hisada does not disclose these limitations.

The Examiner asserts that claim 3 did not actually require that the transport chamber include any heating devices or that the chamber be heated, only that the chamber have the ability to be heated by the insertion of hot workpiece, for example. Applicants have amended the claims to positively recite a heating element for heating the treatment chamber. Hisada does not teach or suggest such a limitation. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

Claims 1-3, 5-8, 10-13, and 16-18 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by French patent 2782156 ("FR '156"). "A claim is anticipated only if each and every element as set forth in the claim is found, either expressly or inherently described, in a single prior art reference." *Verdegaal Bros. V. Union Oil Co. of California*, 814 F.2d 628, 631, 2 USPQ2d 1051, 1053 (Fed. Cir. 1987). Moreover, "[t]he identical invention must be shown in as complete detail as is contained in the * * * claim." *Richardson v. Suzuki Motor Co.*, 868 F.2d 1226, 1236, 9 USPQ2d 1913, 1920 (Fed. Cir. 1989).

Claims 1-2 and 4-20 include the following limitation: "wherein the transport chamber is provided with a heating element for heating the treatment chamber." FR '156 does not disclose these limitations.

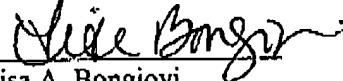
The Examiner asserts that claim 3 did not actually require that the transport chamber include any heating devices or that the chamber be heated, only that the chamber have the ability to be heated by the insertion of hot workpiece, for example. Applicants have amended the claims to positively recite a heating element for heating the treatment chamber. FR '156 does not teach or suggest such a limitation. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that this rejection be withdrawn.

In view of the foregoing, it is respectfully submitted that the instant application is in condition for allowance. Accordingly, it is respectfully requested that this application be allowed and a Notice of Allowance issued. If the Examiner believes that a telephone conference with Applicants' attorneys would be advantageous to the disposition of this case, the Examiner is cordially requested to telephone the undersigned.

In the event the Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks deems additional fees to be due in connection with this application, Applicants' attorney hereby authorizes that such fee be charged to Deposit Account No. 06-1130.

Respectfully submitted,

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June 26, 2003

JUN 27 2003

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